



STATE OF IOWA

TERRY E. BRANSTAD
GOVERNOR

KIM REYNOLDS
LT. GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY
MARK J. SCHOUTEN, DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release:
Thursday, October 27, 2011

Contact:
Dale Woolery (515) 725-0310

Iowans Urged to Dispose of Unused Medicines at Saturday Drop-Off Sites

Iowa's Drug Policy Coordinator is urging Iowans to take advantage of the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA's) latest National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Saturday, October 29, to prevent pill theft and abuse.

"Saturday is a great opportunity to clean out the medicine cabinet, safely dispose of unused medicines, and help address the fast-growing problem of prescription drug abuse," said Mark Schouten, who also serves as Director of the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

"Medicine cabinets are a major source of illegal prescription drug diversion and dangerous abuse, but all of us can help lower the risk by getting rid of unneeded or expired medications."

A national study found more than 70 percent of people abusing prescription drugs got them from friends or relatives. According to the State's Bureau of Vital Statistics, drug overdose deaths involving prescription pain killers in Iowa have increased more than 1,200 percent over about the last decade, from three cases in 2000 to 40 in 2009. The 2010 Iowa Youth Survey reported seven percent of 11th graders said they had abused prescription drugs.

Iowans can dispose of outdated medicines at 54 Take-Back sites throughout the State Saturday. Most sites will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To find a collection site near you, and their exact hours of operation, go to http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback.

The Take-Back program is free and anonymous, and is supported by state and local law enforcement agencies and community organizations in Iowa. During a similar event last April, the DEA reports Americans turned in 188 tons of prescription drugs at nearly 5,400 sites involving more than 3,000 state and local law enforcement partners nationwide.

###